SECTION IV
Follow Up and
Follow Through
GETTING THE WORD OUT

Communications projects get the word out. To make a communications plan you need to answer three questions:

What do you want to say?
To whom do you want to say it?
What do you want your audience to do as a result?

Talk about these three questions with your workgroup. If the questions are hard to answer, see Getting Started for help in deciding what you want to do. Discuss your answers to questions with your teacher or group leader. Make any necessary changes. Now you are ready to begin.

There are lots of ways we can communicate. Look at your answers to the three questions to help you decide which method to use. Pick one (or several) that will bring your message to the group that you want it to reach.

- Tell people what you want to say. This is an effective way to share information. It doesn't cost anything, but it may not reach very many people. How many people can you tell in a day? Will they remember your message without a written copy?

- Put information in the newspaper. This is an effective way to reach lots of people. Writing a Press Release explains how to prepare a message for the newspaper. Newspapers publish press releases, articles, and letters to the editor free. If you want to run an advertisement of some kind, you may have to pay a fee. If the newspaper wants to write about your project, a reporter may make an appointment and visit your group. The reporter would ask questions and may take a picture. Prepare answers to the "who, what, when,
where, and why?" questions before the reporter comes. If a reporter will be visiting your school, tell the principal. Principals usually want to talk to reporters.

- Remember the school newspaper and school newsletters. If your project will last for several months or longer, you could offer to write a regular column to keep readers informed.

- Use the school public announcement system. This method reaches a whole school.

- Put the message on videotape. This is fun, but if you want lots of people to see your message, you must plan ways to show the video. Keep video messages short, and make sure they answer the "who, what, when, where, and why?" questions. Think about what meetings your intended audience might attend. See if you can show your video there. For example, if your message is mainly for parents, perhaps you could show your video at a PTA meeting.

- Go on television or radio. Local stations usually want local news. Use your telephone skills to make arrangements. See Who Ya Gonna Call for Help and Making a Business Telephone Call. If you appear on a program, someone will probably interview you. Know the answers to the "who, what, when, where, why?" questions and you should do fine. If you will be on TV, take along a good picture or some interesting objects related to the project.

- Publish your information. See Getting into Print for some tips on publishing.

- Post the message. Most schools, offices, businesses, and some stores have bulletin boards. Make your message short, neat, and attractive. Put it on bulletin boards that your intended audience is likely to see. Use color and art to make your message stand out. Posters publicize your message in an excellent way. Put posters where lots of people will see them. Ask permission before putting up anything. Arrange to remove your notice at an agreed-upon time.

- Use a computer network Virginia's Public Education Network (VA-PEN) is in most Virginia schools. Many teachers use it. Write a short announcement. Then ask your teacher to share it with other teachers through the "Environmental Education" newsgroup.

- Inform people by mail. If you have a list of the names and addresses of the people who need to receive the message, send them a letter. See Writing a Business Letter for directions.

Whatever communication methods you decide to use, remember most people need to hear something several times before they decide to act. Get the word out several ways and several times so people will be sure to hear your message.
AWARDS & CONTESTS

Do you feel proud of your project? Do you see students and teachers helping the environment? Do you think knowing about environmental successes might help or inspire others to do more or better environmental projects? If so, consider entering a competition or applying for an award. People want to hear about wonderful projects students do. Don’t be shy about sharing your program or helping others to share theirs.

Most awards programs and contests have special forms, deadlines, and requirements. If you apply, follow the instructions EXACTLY. Selection committees only consider applications that follow all the guidelines. Awards programs often change from year to year, so you should ask for current information. Also ask local offices of environmental organizations, litter control programs, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts if they know of any awards your project might be eligible for.

Every award program is different. Some give winners a certificate, a trip, a picture in the newspaper, a plaque, or a present. Awards may honor a class, a student, a school, a teacher, or a group.

Maybe your group likes the idea of awards or contests, but can’t find one that is just right. Perhaps you see excellent environmental activities around you but nobody is noticing. Consider designing your own awards program. Sponsor an environmental awards assembly for the school or for your grade. Perhaps local businesses would donate prizes. Maybe the local newspaper or television station would carry a story about your winners.

If you create a new awards program, get sample applications from existing awards programs. These will give you ideas for planning. Write down everything you will need
to do, and the order in which these jobs should be done. Think and plan carefully for fairness. Think of many kinds of actions and achievements your program could recognize. Get students and adults outside your group to review your plans and make suggestions. Read Festivals for tips on organizing an event. Make a schedule. Assign jobs to workgroups, and get started.

Here are a few environmental awards programs,

**The President's Environmental Youth Awards**
U.S. EPA - Region III
841 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-597-6685

**The Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards**
Secretary of Natural Resources
Suite 733
202 North Ninth Street
Richmond, VA 23219

**Excellence in Environmental Education Awards**
U.S. EPA - Region III
841 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-597-9076

**Conservation Awards Program**
Virginia Wildlife Federation
4602 West Grove Court
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

**National Environmental Achievement Awards**
Renew America
1400 16th Street, N.W., Suite 710
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-232-2252

**Keep Virginia Green Poster Contest**
Virginia Forestry Association
1205 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

**Keep America Beautiful**
9 West Broad Street
Stamford, CT 06902

**Chesapeake Bay Conservation Awards**
Izaak Walton League
Suite 1100
1701 N. Fort Meyer Drive
Arlington, VA 22209
703-528-1818
REPORTING RESULTS

This chapter helps you identify what you achieved in doing your environmental project. It guides you in thinking about the value of your achievements and reporting them. You are welcome to copy the WORKGROUP REPORT and TEACHER/LEADER REPORT.

As a group, discuss the questions. Write answers your group thinks are best in spaces provided. Allow plenty of time to agree on the best answer to each question. Be as specific as possible with your answers. Use your notes and records from your project. After you are done, turn all your answers in to your teacher. Ask him or her to fill out the TEACHER/LEADER REPORT section and mail a copy of both your answers and your teacher’s answers to the Bay Team at the address shown at the end of this section.

Workgroup Report

1. The goals of our project were: __________________________

2. The most valuable way this project changed us was: __________________________

3. The hardest part about this project was: __________________________

4. If we had this project to do over, we would do this differently: __________________________

5. This project benefitted our school, homes, or the community this way: __________________________

6. If we could do another environmental project, we would like to: __________________________
7. Did you have to make any decisions in your project?  
   □ Yes  □ No  
   If yes, what decisions did you make?

8. Did you have to solve any problems in your project?  
   □ Yes  □ No  
   If yes, what problems did you solve?

9. Did you change your mind about anything related to your project after you started?  
   □ Yes  □ No  
   If yes, what changed in your mind?

10. Please put a checkmark next to any of the activities listed below that you did. Use the space provided to tell how many and how much of the activities you did.

   □ We planted or cared for green plants.  
      Explain:__________________________________________

   □ We recycled.  
      Explain:__________________________________________

   □ We improved habitat for wildlife.  
      Explain:__________________________________________

   □ We provided others with information.  
      Explain:__________________________________________

   □ We sponsored an event (festival, etc.).  
      Explain:__________________________________________
☐ We sponsored a cleanup.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We entered a contest or applied for an award.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We sponsored a contest or an award.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We invited a guest speaker.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We made a telephone call.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We wrote a letter.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We made a presentation or speech.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used mathematics skills and information.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used science skills and information.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used social studies skills and information.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used English skills and information.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used a library.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We used a directory.
Explain: ____________________________

☐ We wrote a press release.
Explain: ____________________________
Teacher / Leader Report

Please review your students’ answers to the questions, checking for accuracy and completeness. If you are using a portfolio assessment to grade projects, you might like to keep a copy of their answers for their portfolios. These answers can help to identify their achievements, their progress, and the skills they used and mastered.

The Bay Team wants to know what Virginia students are accomplishing and to give recognition to students for their achievements. We also hope to share this information throughout an informal statewide network of teachers using environmental education projects to teach useful skills and competencies. So we ask you to take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Please return them, along with the copies of the student group answers to the WORKGROUP REPORT, to the Bay Team at the address at the end of this section.

I certify that my students’ description of their work and projects is accurate.
☐ Yes ☐ No

I certify that their achievement merits recognition by the Bay Team.
☐ Yes ☐ No

I am willing to give advice to others who want to know about this type of project.
☐ Yes ☐ No

Please keep me informed me about environmental education in Virginia.
☐ Yes ☐ No

My name ________________________

School address ____________________

Telephone ________________________

VA-PEN ________________________

Title of project ____________________

Grade level____  N.o. students____

Please return Leader Reports and Workgroup Reports to

Virginia Bay Team
College of William & Mary
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Gloucester Point, VA 23062
WHAT NEXT?

So, how did you do? We hope that by this time you have accomplished something of which you can be very proud. We also hope that you want to continue to work and to achieve even more good things for the environment.

This chapter will help you to make plans to continue helping the environment. You may wish to continue with the same thing you have been doing, or to enlarge or expand your project. For example, if you have been recycling in all the classrooms in your grade, you might want to start collecting recyclable materials in all the classrooms in your school. You may want to try a slightly different version of your project; for example, if you have been collecting aluminum cans, you might want to try collecting newspapers. You may want to start completely over with a brand new project.

Continuing with the Same Project

Let's go back to the example of a recycling project. You determined that your school could use a recycling project, you collected supplies and got helpers, and you got the job done. Now you want to keep doing it.

The first thing you need to decide is, do we really need to keep doing it? Was it successful? Has it served its purpose? Did we do such a good job that there is nothing left to be done?

If you decide to continue with the project, you will need to review your lists of equipment and supplies. You may have borrowed things such as collection bins from other people, and they expected that you would return them when you were through. You will have to ask if you may keep the items longer, or you may want to think about asking someone to donate the items to your group, or you may want to try to raise money to buy what you need. You also need to make sure that
all of the people who helped you want to continue to help you. You may have to find
different people to help you; you’ll have to make sure that you can teach them what to
do.

You will need to ask yourselves if you have the time to do this project. If you origi-
nally planned a three month project, and you have decided to extend the project
indefinitely, how is that going to be affected by your other activities? If your original
project lasted from October to December, and you want to keep it going through the
spring, but you’re supposed to play on the softball team this spring, are you going to
have time to work on your project? Everybody in your workgroup will have to ask
themselves those questions.

What if you want to keep going through the summer? Our example of a recycling
project isn’t a very good one in this case. Since the school would be closed in the
summer, there wouldn’t be anyone there to throw out any aluminum cans for you to
collect. But what if your project was to plant a school butterfly garden? Who will take
care of it in the summertime? Your garden will probably just be starting to look nice
and attract butterflies when school lets out for the summer. Someone will have to go
g and water and weed all summer long. You’ll probably want someone to take pictures
of your garden (and any butterflies it may attract) during the summer so people in
your class can see what it looked like when you return to school in the fall. You may
need to go through your school office to make arrangements with the groundskeepers
at your school to let you use the hoses or any other tools during the summer. You’ll
probably have to make arrangements to get someone to drive you to school, since the
school buses won’t be running in the summer.

Expanding the Same Project

Suppose you collected aluminum cans from all the classes in your grade, and you
want to start collecting in all the classes in your school. How many more classrooms
is that? How many more collecting bins will you need? How many more people will
you have to train to help you? How many more trips to the recycling center will you
have to make each week? Who is going to drive you on those extra days? You may
find that your new plan is still a little more than you can handle. Just re-adjust and
start again — keep working on your idea until you have a workable plan.

As you can see, there are a lot of things to consider. You shouldn’t let that stop you,
though. You had to do a lot of hard work and overcome some obstacles to get this far
with your project, so you know by now that you can handle it.

Starting a New Project

That’s easy enough — go back to the beginning of the book and work through the
section on choosing a project again.